

Consolation Stakes.
Nil Desperandum
Stakes.

ected. whose owners are unknown will be
pulsorily sequestered.

Orchestra—March Str. Ind. 2nd, 2nd
(Hgd.) F. C. Jones
D.S.P.

lish one had come in reply to his adding: "We do not want you to our souls; we want the English to our souls."

BEFORE STOCKTAKING.

NEW ADVERTISEMENTS

"HATETH" STAKES-12

	Ind. In.	Ind. In.
Yid	13.0	155
King Hal	13.2	165
Ploughfield	13.0	140
Flybynight (late Wee Willie)	13.1	140
Victory	13.1	150
Iron Duke	13.3	158
Warrior II	13.2	165
Matchbox	13.0	145
Crosby	13.1	145
Town Mouse	13.2	145
Brown Mouse	13.2	150
Titmouse	13.3	147
Fornosa Chief	13.1	153
Essex Chief	13.0	151
Russian Chief	13.3	165
Lucky Pearl (late King Jack)	13.1	165
Glorious Pearl	13.2	145
Lustanian Pearl	13.0	165
Adventuro	13.0	165
Victory Dahlia	13.1	155
Advance Dahlia	13.1	159
Onward Dahlia	13.1	152
Choice Dahlia	13.0	150
The Duke Dahlia	13.0	165
Silver Streak	12.3	165
Star of Doon	12.3	157
Jacobite	13.1	156
Herolind	13.0	150
Warriorini	13.0	149
Aerialin	13.0	140
Haji	13.0	148
Mansur	13.1	148
Oak Bay	13.1	145
Capitano	13.1	154
Foxtro	13.0	165

G. K. HALL BRUTON,

Handicapper.

T. F. HOUGH,

Clerk of Course.

Hongkong, February 28th, 1917. [347]

THE HONGKONG ROPE MANUFACTURING COMPANY, LIMITED.

THE THIRTY-THIRD ORDINARY ANNUAL MEETING OF SHAREHOLDERS in the above Company will be held at St. George's Buildings, Charter Road, Victoria, on SATURDAY, the 10th March, 1917, at 11.30 o'clock in the forenoon, for the purpose of receiving a Statement of Accounts and the Report of the General Manager for the year ending 31st December, 1916, and electing a Consulting Committee and Auditors.

The TRANSFER BOOKS of the Company will be CLOSED from MONDAY, the 5th March, 1917, until SATURDAY, the 10th March, 1917, both days inclusive.

SHEWAN, TOMES & Co.,

General Managers.

Hongkong, 24th February, 1917. [344]

GREEN ISLAND CEMENT COMPANY, LIMITED, AND REDUCED.

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN that the TRANSFER BOOKS of the Company will be CLOSED from THURSDAY, 1st March, to SATURDAY, 3rd March, 1917, both days inclusive.

The return of Capital of \$2.50 per Share will be paid to Shareholders on and after the 15th March, 1917, on presentation of Share Certificates for endorsement.

By Order of the

BOARD OF DIRECTORS.

Hongkong, 22nd February, 1917. [329]

UNIVERSITY OF HONGKONG.

MATRICULATION, SENIOR AND JUNIOR LOCAL EXAMINATIONS.

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN that these EXAMINATIONS will commence on MONDAY, July 9th, 1917.

Arrangements will be made to hold the Examination at any town where a sufficient number of candidates offer themselves. Candidates who wish to be examined at any other place than Hongkong or Shanghai must apply to the Registrar on or before April 2nd, 1917.

Forms of entry and all particulars can be obtained on application to the REGISTRAR, THE UNIVERSITY, HONGKONG.

The entry form, duly filled in, must reach the Registrar, together with the fee (Ten Dollars, Hongkong Currency) on or before May 2nd, 1917.

The following Scholarships and Prizes will be awarded on the results of the Matriculation Examination, provided that candidates of sufficient merit offer themselves:

(a) Two King Edward VII. Scholarships of £40 a year each, for five years, tenable in any Faculty. A Candidate for these Scholarships must be under the age of 21 on July 1st, and must before the first day of the Examination submit to the Registrar proof that he is a British subject.

(b) One President's Scholarship of Four Hundred Dollars (Peking Currency) for five years, tenable in any Faculty. A Candidate for this Scholarship must be under the age of 21 years on July 1st, and must before the first day of the Examination submit to the Registrar proof that he is the son of a Chinese parent; that he was not born in any British Possession or Protectorate; that he has not adopted any foreign nationality; and that he is not eligible to compete for a King Edward VII. Scholarship.

(c) Two Chinese General Chamber of Commerce Scholarships of 300 Dollars a year each, for 4 years, tenable in the Faculty of Engineering. These Scholarships will be awarded to poor students who would otherwise be unable to enter the University.

(d) Five cash prizes of \$100 each (Hongkong Currency).

Candidates who secure King Edward VII. or President's Scholarships or cash prizes must enter the University on the day on which the University Session opens and must reside in one of the hostels directly managed by the University.

The Examinations will be conducted according to the Regulations for the Senior and Junior Local Examinations and for the Matriculation Examination, 1917. [345]

WANTED.

ENGINEER, B. A. Abshire, for Harbour or Shop. Apply in own writing with copy of resume, stating age and salary required to: W. S. BAILEY & Co., Ltd., Kowloon. [108]

INTIMATIONS

HONGKONG JOCKEY CLUB.

RACE MEETING, 1917.

TO-DAY (WEDNESDAY) AND SATURDAY (OFF-DAY).

FEBRUARY 28th, AND 3rd MARCH.

TICKETS OF ADMISSION to the GRAND STAND and ENCLOSURE may be obtained from Messrs. KELLY & WALSH, LTD., or at the Gate. Price \$10 for the Meeting (excluding the Off-Day), or \$4 per day. Tickets for the Off-Day, \$3.

No one admitted without a Ticket, to be shown to the Ticket Inspector at the Gate.

T. F. HOUGH, Clerk of the Course.

Hongkong, 23rd February, 1917. [330]

HONGKONG JOCKEY CLUB.

THE STEWARDS request the pleasure of the presence of the LADIES at the GRAND STAND and the ENCLOSURE during the Races.

A Stand and Enclosure will be reserved for Members and Members' Wives and Families. Tickets for which are being sent out with the Members' Tickets.

All Tickets must be produced to gain admission.

Special accommodation will be reserved in the Grand Stand for Chinese Ladies and their Female attendants in the Stand erected on the plot of ground next to the Lusitano Club Stand.

T. F. HOUGH,

Clerk of the Course.

Hongkong, 23rd February, 1917. [331]

NOTICE.

PROPOS of the above Members are hereby notified that although Membership of the Jockey Club entitles them to free admission to the Enclosure and Stands during the Race Meeting an opportunity is given to them to make a special contribution to the War Charities by also purchasing an admission Ticket at the Gate. A Book will be in care of the Gate Keeper in which Members are asked to record any such purchases.

T. F. HOUGH,

Clerk of the Course.

Hongkong, 23rd February, 1917. [332]

HONGKONG JOCKEY CLUB.

NO Servants will be allowed inside the ENCLOSURE of the Race Course during the Race Days WITHOUT TICKETS, which can be had on application to the Under-Secretary. These Tickets are only available for Servants while in attendance on their employers or when on duty at the various Stands.

Any Chinese found loitering about with Servants' passes in their possession will forfeit them, and the holders thereof will be removed from the Enclosure.

T. F. HOUGH,

Clerk of the Course.

Hongkong, 23rd February, 1917. [333]

FIRE INSURANCE ASSOCIATION OF HONGKONG.

RACE HOLIDAY.

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN that all FIRE INSURANCE OFFICES will be CLOSED for the Transaction of PUBLIC BUSINESS TO-DAY (WEDNESDAY), the 28th instant, at 11.45 A.M.

By Order, A. E. LOWE, Secretary.

Hongkong, 24th February, 1917. [339]

MARINE INSURANCE ASSOCIATION OF HONGKONG.

RACE HOLIDAY.

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN that all MARINE INSURANCE OFFICES will be CLOSED for the Transaction of PUBLIC BUSINESS TO-DAY (WEDNESDAY), the 28th instant, at 11.45 A.M.

By Order, A. E. LOWE, Secretary.

Hongkong, 24th February, 1917. [340]

HONGKONG HOTEL.

SPECIAL DINNERS will be served in the GRILL ROOM on the following

RACE DAY.

TO-DAY (WEDNESDAY),

at \$3.50 per head.

ORCHESTRA in attendance.

Place of tables at Hotel Office.

[341]

HONGKONG STOCK EXCHANGE.

IT IS HEREBY NOTIFIED that there will be NO OFFICIAL QUOTATIONS during the Three Race Days, viz., 28th, 27th and 26th inst.

By Order of the Committee, B. HANCOCK, Acting Secretary.

Hongkong, 28th February, 1917. [343]

HONGKONG AND SHANGHAI BANKING CORPORATION.

THE FINAL DIVIDEND DECLARED for the Year ending 31st December, 1916, at the rate of Two Pounds Three Shillings Sterling, together with a Bonus of Ten Shillings Sterling per Share, is Payable on and after MONDAY, the 28th day of February, Current, at the Office of the Corporation, where Shareholders are requested to apply for Warrants.

By Order of the Court of Directors, N. J. STABB, Chief Manager.

Hongkong, 24th February, 1917. [337]

HOUSES TO LET

TO LET—FURNISHED.

From May to end of October.

STRAWBERRY HILL, THE PEAK. Six Rooms, Garden and Tennis Court. Apply to—**"H. W. L."**, 1, Des Voeux Road Central. [188]

TO LET—IMMEDIATELY.

LARGE OFFICE, Centrally Situated in Queen's Road, fully partitioned and fitted with electric light, telephones and sub-exchange.

Apply—

"X. Y. Z." Office.

Care of "Daily Press" Office. [322]

TO LET.

NO. 45, ELGIN STREET, 6 Room House From 1st April. Apply to—**DR. M. E. ASGER**, New Post Office Building. [289]

TO LET.

2 NEW HOUSES now Building in Conduit Road. Ready for occupation on 1st February, 1917. For rent and other particulars apply to—**H. M. H. NEMAZEE**, 1 Des Voeux Road. [106]

TO LET.

NO. 42, ELGIN STREET. Apply to—**PERCY SMITH, SETH & FLEMING**. [109]

TO LET—AT THE PEAK.

FURNISHED, 2 Stewart Terrace. Apply—**H. E. POLLOCK**, Princess Buildings. [97]

TO LET.

FLATS in "TWO MESS," No. 8, THE PEAK. Apply, Property Office, JARDINE, MATHESON & Co., Ltd. [90]

TO LET.

GODOWN in Duddell Street. Light and airy Offices overlooking Statue Square. Moderate rent. For rent and other particulars apply to—**"H. W. L."**, 1, Des Voeux Road Central. [80]

TO LET.

FROM 1st MAY. Apply to—**SHEWAN, TOMES & Co.** [69]

TO LET.

FOUR-ROOMED HOUSES in Gordon Terrace and Salisbury Avenue, Kowloon. A FLAT in Humphreys Buildings, Kowloon. Apply to—**HUMPHREYS ESTATE & FINANCE CO., LTD.**, Alexandra Buildings. [291]

TO LET.

OFFICES at 2, Connaught Road Central. Apply to—**THE HONGKONG LAND INVESTMENT AND GENERAL CO., LTD.** [38]

TO LET.

NO. 3, CAMERON VILLAS, No. 55, THE PEAK. "ELANDONAN," No. 54, THE PEAK. No. 3, GOUGH HILL (No. 102, THE PEAK). Furnished, for 2 or 4 months from 1st June, 1917.

No. 25, SHELLEY STREET. 8-ROOMED HOUSE at Mount Kellett. Furnished for 5 or 6 months.

No. 12, BEACONSFIELD ARCADE SHOP. NO. 3, CAMERON VILLAS, 55, THE PEAK. KELLY'S CREST, 68, THE PEAK. No. 25, BELLILIOS TERRACE, with entrance on Conduit Road.

TWO GODOWNS, in Duddell Street. No. 2, DES VOEUX VILLAS, 51, THE PEAK. No. 55, THE PEAK (CAMERON VILLAS). Apply to—**LINSEED & DAYE**, 3rd Floor, Alexandra Buildings. [30]

HONGKONG POLICE (RESERVE).

SERVICE RIFLE CHAMPIONSHIP MEETING FOR **H.E. THE GOVERNOR'S CUP.** EASTER SUNDAY, APRIL 8th, 1917.

Open to any person in the Colony. Entrance Fee \$1. (to be used in connection with printing expenses). Service Rifles. Open Sight. 100 yds. Grouping. 400 yds. Deliberate. 200 yds. Deliberate. 500 yds. Deliberate. 600 yds. Deliberate. Printed conditions may be obtained on written application to Inspector H. A. LAMBERT, Headquarters (Sub. H.K.P.R.) [310]

INTIMATION

WATSON'S OLD BROWN BRANDY

E QUALITY.



25 YEARS IN WOOD.

A. S. WATSON & CO., LTD.

WINE AND SPIRIT MERCHANTS.

TELEPHONE 816.

[12]

BIRTH.

SURMAN.—At the Government Civil Hospital, Hongkong, on February 28th, to Mr. and Mrs. E. J. SURMAN, The University, a son.

HONGKONG OFFICE: 10A, DES VOEUX ROAD, C. LONDON OFFICE: 121, FLEET STREET, E.C.

[348]

The Daily Press.

HONGKONG 28th FEBRUARY, 1917.

GOOD NEWS FROM TWO FRONTS.

As an offset to the daily list of Germany's piratical achievements comes very gratifying news of British successes in France and Mesopotamia. Strongholds in the valley of the Ancre, which we expected to take only after heavy fighting, have been quietly relinquished by the enemy as a result of the intolerable pressure brought to bear against them, and our troops have advanced another two or three miles along a front of eleven miles with, apparently, insignificant losses, on the difficult road to Bapaume. The first indication of the enemy's intentions was furnished on the 23rd instant by a number of fires, which were observed to break out in the German lines in front of Pys. These fires were due to the deliberate destruction of dug-outs. Next day our patrols found that the Germans were retiring. Surprised by the unusual quiet, they feared at first that a trap had been set, but, upon realising the real situation, they swept forward exultantly. The retreat was effected under cover of a mist, which hid the movements of the enemy from our aeroplanes, while the frost of the preceding days made it possible to remove most of the guns. The Germans did not attempt to fight a rearguard action, but contented themselves with endeavouring to obstruct our advance by posting machine-gunners and snipers at various points of vantage along the line of our pursuit. Only at one point was obstinate resistance offered, and that was on the hill commanding Boom Ravine, in the direction of Miraumont. As a

result of the operations our line has now been carried forward to Serre, Miraumont, Irles, Pys and Warlencourt, and we have gained a large tract of new country not ploughed up by shell-fire.

The places occupied include the famous Butte of Warlencourt, described as a "German held Gibraltar," round which, it is said, lie the bones of more soldiers than are to be found in almost any outlying position on the Somme. The enemy have undoubtedly many carefully prepared positions in their rear, and it is thought that they will most probably make a stand on Bapaume Ridge. There is an unconfirmed report that they are preparing to abandon the great strategic point of Bapaume, which is the centre of a network of roads and railways stretching behind the German lines from Arras, in the North, to Peronne in the South. This was the immediate objective of the operations which opened last July. Whether the report prove to be correct or not, the progress which has been made during the past few days is eminently satisfactory—a fact which will be readily appreciated when it is remembered that our advance in the direction of Bapaume has hitherto been at the average rate of about a mile a month owing partly to the formidable nature of the fortifications encountered, and, partly, to the unpropitious weather experienced since the autumn. What ever excuses the enemy may offer for their action—and no doubt, it can be justified by sound military considerations—it can only be regarded as an admission of weakness.

In Mesopotamia the British have recaptured Kut-el-Amara, which General Townshend and his force of ten thousand Indian and British troops were obliged to surrender to the Turks on May 1st of last year, owing to the exhaustion of their food supplies, after gallantly withstanding a siege for 143 days. For more than seven months after their capitulation the remainder of the British Expeditionary force remained stationary, while their lines of communication were being improved. In the interval two light railways were built, the river flotilla was strengthened, spacious wharfrage accommodation was provided at the base at Basra, and ample supplies were accumulated. Finally, in December General MAUDE marched through the Es Sinni lines, on the right bank of the Tigris, which had been evacuated in the summer by the Turks, and established himself on the waterway known as Shatt-el-Hai within a very short distance of Kut. On the left bank of the river he vigorously bombarded Samarra-yat, situated fifteen miles below Kut, where the enemy held formidable positions. From these they have now been driven, and are in full retreat in the direction of Baghdad, westward of Kut. Though the extent of the Turkish losses has not yet been ascertained they are probably heavy, for a strong force of our cavalry and infantry were engaged all day inflicting severe casualties, and the prisoners taken in two days number nearly two thousand. This success will serve to dishearten the enemy and to restore any loss of prestige which the British may have suffered in the Middle East as a result of their former failure.

Mr. Gordon Main, son of Dr. Main of Hangchow, and late of Messrs. Scott, Harding & Co., has gone to Egypt. Prior to that he was serving for some time with his regiment, the Westminster Dragoons, in Ireland.

During the week ending February 24th there were 23 cases of small-pox reported (one English, one Indian and the rest Chinese), of which 14 proved fatal. In the same period there were three cases of enteric fever (one English, one Chinese and one Portuguese), one proving fatal; and two cases (Chinese) of enteric fever, one of which proved fatal.

A VISITOR.

[Regarding the matter from a purely practical point of view we have no hesitation in saying that the Races furnish to the War Charities money which would otherwise remain in people's pockets. How far those who gamble plunge beyond their depth we have no means of knowing, but people often lament losses which they can well afford. To say that they should have a better use for their money in these days, we fear, a counsel of perfection.—En. T.D.P.]

HONGKONG MAGISTRACY.

A TIDY HOARD OF GOLD.

A Chinese appeared before Mr. Wood on a charge of attempting to export 7 lbs. of gold from the Colony. Inspector Gordon said the man was arrested with the gold in his possession at Kowloon Station. His story to the police was to the effect that he had melted down a number of ornaments at Singapore and had brought it to China to be purified. Defendant, in reply to the Magistrate, said he was ignorant of the law against exportation of gold.

A fine of \$100 was imposed.

SPORT.

ROYAL HONGKONG GOLF CLUB.

CAPTAIN'S CUP—1917.

Below is the draw for the above Cup. Players are requested to get their matches played off at the earliest possible opportunity:—

F. J. de Rome and A. E. Carleton. D. G. Cheeseman and H. Hancock. O. H. Gale and Dr. Woodman. H. Handley Pegg and W. C. Bond. Captain Campbell and E. Golland. R. Henderson and G. Tisdall.

DID SCIENCE HASTEN WAR?

Three scientific developments were among the leading factors in deciding Germany that the time was opportune for war, said Mr. Kilburn Scott at the closing meeting of the Educational Association's conference recently. These were the manufacture of nitrates from the air; the success of aircraft, especially the Zeppelin, which nullified the insular position of this country; and the gyro compass, which allowed battleships and submarines to be steered independently of magnetism.

The new Bandman Opera Co. will open their season at the Theatre Royal, Hongkong, on March 7th with "High Jinks."

A Chinese, who is undergoing trial at the Mixed Court, Shanghai, in connection with a charge of defrauding the Venus Life Assurance Co., endeavoured to commit suicide by swallowing coins, reports the N. C. Daily News. He is stated to have procured paper and pencil from somewhere and after writing a letter in which he asked that his friends should be informed of his death, so that they might draw the insurance money from the China Mutual Life Insurance Co., he swallowed nine copper cents, six cash and three 10-cent pieces. He was taken to the hospital, and it is alleged that patients in adjacent beds are complaining of having their rest disturbed by the noise he makes as he turns in his sleep.

CORRESPONDENCE.

WASTE OF MONEY.

[TO THE EDITOR OF THE "HONGKONG DAILY PRESS."]

SIR,—Being a visitor in this Colony, I went down to the Race Course to witness the races. What has struck me most as an observer, not as a gambler, is the amount of money that has been wasted in sweeps and betting! In the present crisis money should be economised for more moral purposes and domestic needs. I have seen rolls of paper-money flowing freely at the sweeps counter, I have heard people, even ladies, say: "Oh! I have lost so much, what a pity!" and so on. People have pity for their loss and yet no pity to help those really in need of bread! In my opinion, the true meaning of the word *racas* is nothing but "Gambling days."

I am surprised to see such things in a British Colony, where a law forbidding gambling is in existence. Yours faithfully,

A VISITOR.

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THE WAR.

IMPORTANT BRITISH ADVANCES ON WESTERN FRONT AND IN MESOPOTAMIA.

PRESIDENT WILSON ON SUBMARINISM.

BRITISH BREAD REGULATIONS.

CUNARD LINER SUNK.

Franco-Belgian Front.

LATEST CABLES.

[THROUGH REUTER'S AGENCY.]

IMPORTANT GERMAN RETIREMENT. ENEMY RETREAT TWO MILES.

LONDON, February 26th.

Field Marshal Sir Douglas Haig, in a *communiqué*, says:—Our advance has been maintained and now extends to an eleven mile front, from the east of Guedecourt to the south of Gommecourt, with a depth of two miles. We occupy Butte de Warlencourt and the villages of Warlencourt, Eaucourt, Pys, Miraumont, and have reached the outskirts of Le Barque, Ires, and Puisieux Amont.

We repulsed, with loss to the enemy, an attack on a British post on the south bank of the Somme, and successfully raided the neighbourhoods of Arras, Monchy-au-Bois, and Lens.

EARLIER CABLES.

LONDON, February 26th.

Reuter's correspondent at Headquarters telegraphs:—A patrol on Saturday morning first discovered the retirement of the German line in the Ancre Valley. This is unquestionably due to the recent British intolerable pressure. The first intimation that anything unwanted had occurred was early on February 23rd, when a number of fires were observed to break out in the enemy's lines in front of Pys, due to the deliberate firing of dug-outs.

The correspondent compares the advance movements in the afternoon with the busiest days of the great Somme push. The extreme depth to which the German retreat has been carried is reported to be three miles. We have occupied Miraumont, Miraumont le Petit, Pys and Serre, without meeting obstinate resistance. The Germans employed obstructive tactics, but there was no fighting.

NEW GROUND SECURED WITHOUT

LOSS OF LIFE.

In rearward actions yesterday evening we advanced from Warlencourt and Ires towards Miraumont, on the enemy's heels. This line has now been established. We gained a large tract of country without loss of life and the new ground has not been ploughed up by shell-fire for the resumption of the battle.

BAPAUME NEXT.

There is an unconfirmed report to the effect that the enemy is evacuating the great strategic point at Bapaume, where explosions and fires were observed to be taking place.

FRENCH FRONT.

EFFECTIVE ARTILLERY FIRE.

LONDON, February 26th.

A French *communiqué* states:—Our artillery was effectively active in the region of Morchomme. There was intermittent artillery firing in Lorraine and in the Vosges.

SUCCESSFUL RAID ON GERMAN LINES.

LONDON, February 26th.

A French *communiqué* says:—We raided the German line near Ville-sur-Tourbe, destroyed many dug-outs and brought back prisoners and material.

An enemy *coup de main*, north-east of Soissons and west of Avocourt, failed. We made prisoners.

Three enemy aeroplanes were brought down and our air squadrons heavily bombed bivouacs and a munitions depot near Spincourt (where there were many explosions), and also airfields at Bazancourt and railway stations in the region of Wissembourg.

THE BRITISH ADVANCE.

PRESENT POSITION DESCRIBED.

LONDON, February 26th.

Reuter's correspondent at Headquarters describes the German obstructive tactics—the posting of machine-guns and teams of snipers at various vantage points of our line of pursuit—but says there was definite resistance at one point only, namely, the hill commanding the Boom ravine, in the direction of Miraumont.

The capture of Serre gives the British a most important dominating position for further operations. The famous Butte de Warlencourt is also occupied. This is a sort of German field Gibraltar, having been fought over inch by inch, lost and retaken. Round it are the bones of more soldiers than are to be found in almost any outlying position.

Owing to the mist, the general advance was made only after the patrols had established touch with the enemy. These were surprised at the unusual quiet, and thought the enemy was practising a trap, but, realising the real situation, they swept forward most exultingly.

The fog was most advantageous to the enemy in shielding his retirement from our aeroplanes, while the frost of the preceding days had enabled him to withdraw most of the guns. He left a few to make a show of firing, and an unwanted quantity of ammunition, for the simple reason that there was no time to move the shells.

British patrols are still out in every direction, and, until they have reported, it is impossible to say where the Germans will make their stand; but undoubtedly they have many carefully-prepared positions in their rear, and the Bapaume ridge is the most probable. The fact that the enemy is strategically retreating from strongholds which we expected to win only by fighting heavily, reveals a new phase of his defensive weakness.

The Boom ravine was the scene of desperate fighting on February 17th, when the British attacked in the darkness and fog. One battalion was especially tried. It lost all its officers, but the sergeant-major led the men. Finding a gap in the enemy wire, they captured the Grandcourt trench and entered a deep ravine, which presented an awful sight of smashed trees and mangled dead, the result of the British cannonade.

GERMAN REPORT.

LONDON, February 26th.

A Berlin official message says:—Our anti-aircraft guns brought down a French airship ablaze, near Metz, on the night of the twenty-third. Her cargo of bombs exploded when she touched the ground, and her crew of fourteen was killed. The details of the construction of the airship are easily recognisable from the remnants.

Italian Front.

LATEST CABLES.

[THROUGH REUTER'S AGENCY.]

ITALIAN OPERATIONS.

SUCCESSFUL AERIAL BOMBARDMENT.

LONDON, February 26th.

An Italian official report states:—We drove back and dispersed enemy detachments south-east of Gorizia.

Two of our airships successfully dropped 24 tons of high explosives on the railway station at Rifemborgo and an aviation ground.

We made progress on the north of Trieste.

Naval Activities.

LATEST CABLES.

[THROUGH REUTER'S AGENCY.]

ANOTHER ATTACK ON ENGLISH COAST.

WOMAN AND CHILD KILLED.

LONDON, February 26th.

In the House of Commons, Sir Edward Carson announced that German destroyers bombarded Broadstairs and Margate in the early morning. A woman and a child were killed, two persons injured, and two houses damaged.

A DOZEN SHELLS.

LONDON, February 26th.

Unofficial details show that in the bombardment a dozen shells fell on the coast. All the casualties were in a village. A shell also dropped in a town four miles away.

ADDITIONAL DETAILS.

LONDON, February 26th.

In the House of Commons, Sir Edward Carson stated that a patrol of our destroyers, between 11 and 12 o'clock last night, encountered various enemy destroyers and was engaged for some time, being under heavy fire from guns and torpedoes. Our destroyers were undamaged. The effect on the enemy could not be ascertained, owing to the darkness.

Another force of destroyers bombarded, for a quarter of an hour, the undefended towns of Broadstairs and Margate. As soon as the firing was heard, our forces in the vicinity closed in on the enemy who had withdrawn before our men arrived.

AMERICAN STEAMER'S ACHIEVEMENT.

PARIS, February 27th.

The American steamer *Orleans*, from New York, has entered the Gironde.

EARLIER CABLES.

THE DUTCH SINKINGS.

PUTTING BLAME ON BRITAIN.

AMSTERDAM, February 26th.

According to Reuter's correspondent at Amsterdam, the German Legation's explanation of the recent torpedoing of Dutch ships blames Britain for the inability of Dutch ships to utilise the opportunity to depart from England as offered by the Germans, extending the time limit to midnight of February 10th.

BRITAIN BLAMELESS.

LONDON, February 26th.

The Rotterdam correspondent of the *Handelsblad* states that the German Naval Attaché at The Hague communicated the offer to the Dutch shipowners at seven in the evening of February 10th, when it was too late to give the necessary instructions to Dutch ships in England. Thus the concession was useless, and Britain was blameless.

NARROW ESCAPES.

AMSTERDAM, February 26th.

An official Berlin message, recapitulating the excuses mentioned on February 25th, mentions that the owners of thirty-three Dutch ships, including twenty laden with corn for the Dutch Government, asked Germany for permission to leave Falmouth and Dartmouth. Eighteen undertook to sail, but apparently only eight took the risk.

THE SUBMARINE PIRATE.

LONDON, February 26th.

According to Reuter, it is stated in Dutch circles that it was the *U 3* which attacked the Dutch steamers, torpedoing and sinking three and placing bombs on others.

The *Menado* was rescued by a British trawler and towed into harbour. The whereabouts of the others is unknown. The crews were towed to the Scilly Isles, it being thought that their ships had been sunk.

Eleven other Dutch ships were ordered by their owners to set sail simultaneously, but fortunately they had not cleared.

AN OFFICER'S ACCOUNT.

LONDON, February 26th.

A Dutch officer, interviewed in London, said the submarine fired an aerial torpedo and then fired shells till the ships stopped. She then ordered the crews to the boats within five minutes, saying she would sink the steamers because they were in British waters. They barely had time to escape.

CUNARD LINER SUNK.

270 PERSONS SAVED.

LONDON, February 26th.

The Cunard liner *Laconia*, 18,000 tons, bound from New York to Liverpool, has been sunk.

LATER.

The *Laconia* was torpedoed without warning.

Two hundred and seventy persons, including passengers, were saved from the *Laconia*.

[The *Laconia* was built in 1911 at Newcastle, by Swan and Hunter. Her registered tonnage was 18,160.]

THE "U 30" INTERNED.

FLUSHING, February 26th.

The *U 30* has been disarmed and is to be interned.

GERMANY'S ADVICE TO BRAZIL.

LONDON, February 26th.

Reuter's correspondent at Rio de Janeiro says that Germany has informed the Brazilian Minister in Berlin that the decision to maintain the submarine blockade is unalterable. He suggests that Brazil should have recourse to diplomacy if Brazilian ships are sunk.

The Balkans.

EARLIER CABLES.

[THROUGH REUTER'S AGENCY.]

GERMAN REPORT.

LONDON, February 26th.

A wireless German official message says:—French attacks were unsuccessful south of Cernay. The enemy yesterday lost eight aeroplanes.

CONCESSION TO GREECE.

LONDON, February 26th.

Reuter learns that the Allies are permitting certain cargoes of grain to enter Greek ports in order to relieve the more pressing necessities of the Greeks, but the blockade will not be raised till General Sarraïl's flank is completely secure.

The Near East.

EARLIER CABLES.

[THROUGH REUTER'S AGENCY.]

BRITISH SUCCESS IN MESOPOTAMIA.

KUT EVACUATED BY THE TURKS.

LONDON, February 26th.

A Turkish *communiqué* admits the evacuation of Kut, "according to a pre-arranged plan and in order to effect a junction with reinforcements."

LONDON, February 26th.

In the House of Commons Mr. Bonar Law announced that, as a result of operations in Mesopotamia, the whole enemy position between Samarra and Kut el Amara has been secured, and that Kut el Amara passes automatically into our hands.

ENEMY IN FULL RETREAT.

LONDON, February 26th.

A Mesopotamia official message states:—Early on Saturday, we captured a ridge across the neck of the Shumnah Peninsula and it became evident that the enemy was in full retreat in the direction of Bagdalah. To the west of Kut el Amara, many Turkish depots and stores were afloat. A strong force of infantry and cavalry was heavily engaged all day long, inflicting severe casualties.

In the meantime, we pursued our successes on the Samarra position and captured the fifth Turkish line, the Nak-halla and Suwaida positions, and reached the Ataba marsh and Magasia line. Aeroplanes co-operated invaluable by bombing and machine-gunning at minimum altitude.

In two days we took 1,730 prisoners. The whole of the enemy's positions from Samarra to Kut el Amara are thus secured—Kut passing automatically into our hands. The full Turkish losses are as yet unknown.

Russian Front.

EARLIER CABLES.

[THROUGH REUTER'S AGENCY.]

GERMAN REPORT.

LONDON, February 26th.

We repulsed the Russians to westward of the As and south of Berezany. Strong Russian attacks north of the Tartar Pass failed.

RUSSIAN SUCCESSES.

TURKS DISPERSED.

LONDON, February 26th.

A Russian official wireless message states:—Reconnoitring parties penetrated the enemy's trenches to the west of Jablonitz.

Scouts dispersed Turks on the western bank of Lake Van, inflicting heavy losses.

General.

LATEST CABLES.

[THROUGH REUTER'S AGENCY.]

AMERICA AND GERMANY.

THE REAL AMERICAN SPIRIT.

Ex-President Taft, Mr. J. H. Choate and numerous other prominent Americans have issued a manifesto stating that the majority of Americans who favour action at present are silent, not wishing to embarrass President Wilson, therefore the small number of Pacifists are creating a wrong impression of the nation's spirit. They urge Americans to join the movement for immediate action, instead of waiting for the murder of more Americans before entering on war.

STATEMENT BY PRESIDENT WILSON.

WASHINGTON, February 26th.

In the Congress President Wilson asked authority to establish "armed neutrality." He stated that the Government had made full plans to protect American ships in the German war zone, and pointed out that while they desired peace there was something greater than peace, namely, protection of the rights of Americans, and the upholding of the rights of American ships to sail the seas unmolested.

In the course of his weighty and outspoken review of the submarine situation, President Wilson said he feared that none of the neutral nations who had been asked to co-operate to prevent submarine depredations thought it wise to join in common action. American commerce was suffering more in apprehension than in fact, ships timidly keeping in home ports. He dwelt on the most serious and growing congestion arising from this policy, which in itself might accomplish the German aim. He characterised the sinking of the *Lynnhaven* as disclosing a ruthlessness of method deserving great condemnation. He laid stress on the indications and expressions of purpose by the German Press and authorities, which increased the impression that the future sparing of American ships and people was likely to be more due to unexpected discretion and restraint on the part of submarine commanders or fortunate circumstances than the carrying out of instructions.

DEFENSIVE ARMS FOR AMERICAN SHIPS.

WASHINGTON, February 27th.

President Wilson has requested Congress to authorise the supply of merchant ships with defensive arms and also adequate means of protection, including war risks and insurance.

EARLIER CABLES.

THE PROPOSAL TO USE U.S. ARMED FORCES.

LONDON, February 26th.

A message from Washington states that the Republican resolution in the Senate, authorising President Wilson to use the armed forces of the United States in order to protect the commerce, property and lives of Americans, was not adopted, but was referred to the Foreign Relations Committee, thus being shelved, after a famous debate in which the Republicans attacked the President for hesitation to act.

The Republicans are apparently trying to force an extra Session of the Senate in order to prevent President Wilson from fully controlling the situation as regards Germany.

INDIAN PRINCE VISITS CAIRO.

POHAR SAH, February 25th.

The Maharaja of Bikanir arrived here and proceeded to Cairo, where he proposed to stay for a week.

LATEST CABLES.

THE WAR LOAN. INTERESTING DETAILS.

LONDON, February 26th.

Mr. Bonar Law, in the course of his statement on the War Loan, said the converted Treasury bills amounted to £130,000,000. He pointed out that the number of subscribers was, approximately, 5,239,000, and emphasised that while the German Loans successively decreased ours increased. The cost of floating the Loan, including advertising, was only 275,000. The success of the Loan was due to the patriotism of the people, evidenced in the will and financial ability of the country to win the war.

EARLIER CABLES.

THE FINAL FIGURES.

LONDON, February 26th.

In the House of Commons Mr. Bonar Law made a final statement as to receipts in connection with the Loan. He announced that the total of new money, including Treasury Bills converted, amounted to £1,000,312,850. (Loud cheers.)

LATEST CABLES.

IRISH AFFAIRS.

REVIVAL OF CONSPIRACY.

LONDON, February 27th.

Mr. Duke, K.C., in the House of Commons, speaking on the Motion for Adjournment of the House, said the great majority of those arrested during the late rebellion in Ireland and kept as prisoners had, since their release, busied themselves in reviving the conspiracy. He declared that it was inadvisable to enter into details. Inspector-General Bryan Mahon, of the Irish Constabulary, had accepted responsibility for what had been done.

EARLIER CABLES.

LONDON, February 26th.

In the House of Commons, in reply to Mr. John Dillon, Mr. Duke stated that twenty-eight persons had been arrested in Ireland under the Defence of the Realm Act, on suspicion of acting prejudicially to the public safety. It was not proposed to try them, but they had been prohibited from residing in Ireland. Mr. Dillon gave notice that he would move the adjournment thereon.

LATEST CABLES.

WAR MEDIATION.

REPORTED PROPOSAL FROM ARGENTINA.

BUENOS AIRES, February 26th.

It is reported that Argentina has initiated negotiation with the Latin-American Republics with a view to jointly offering mediation.

BRITISH BREAD.

REGULATIONS AS TO WEIGHT, QUALITY AND AGE.

LONDON, February 26th.

The Press Bureau reports that Lord Davenport has notified that bread must be sold in loaves weighing one pound or an even number of pounds; must be twelve hours old and not exchanged for old bread previously sold; must not contain currants, sultanas, milk or sugar. Inspectors are authorised to weigh on the premises or in course of delivery. Rolls must weigh two ounces.

EARLIER CABLES.

RATIONS OF GERMAN PRISONERS.

NEW SCALE ADOPTED.

LONDON, February 26th.

Lord Davenport has approved a new scale of rations to German prisoners of war and those interned, involving a reduction to the proportions recently enjoyed on the British public.

OBITUARY.

MR. JONATHAN SAMUEL, M.P.

LONDON, February 27th.

The death is announced of Mr. Jonathan Samuel, M.P. for Stockton-on-Tees.

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"OLD
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dispel Constipation, Biliousness, torpid
liver, sick headaches, and clear the com-
plexion. Of Chemists, or 60 cents the
phial, from Dr. Williams' Medicine Co.,
86, Szechuen Road, Shanghai.

[81-82]

FORTHCOMING EVENTS.

TODAY

11.45 A.M.—Hongkong Race—3rd Day.

Saturday, 3rd March:—

2 P.M.—Hongkong Race—Off Day.

Wednesday, 7th March:—

7.15 P.M.—New Bandman Opera Co. at the

Theatre Royal, "High Jinks."

Thursday, 8th and 9th March:—

Flowers and Vegetable Show in the Botanical

Gardens.

Saturday, 10th March:—

11.30 A.M.—Hongkong Rope Manufacturing

Co., Ltd., Meeting of Shareholders.

12.30 P.M.—Hongkong and South China

Steam Fisheries Co., Ltd., General Meeting

at the Office of the Liquidators New

Government Building.

"ASAHI BEER."



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FARM WOMEN.

PREJUDICE AND PROGRESS

There is a species of Man which does
not like Woman. It is confined at pre-
sent to farmers.

This is what they have against woman.
She is expensive. She does not like getting up early.
She does not believe edw want milking

on Sunday.
She is no good with horses.
She cannot stand about in wet clover.

She cannot plough.
She has to be taught to work on the
land.

She needs a proper home.
Labourers will not work with her.

The Farmer's Boy is evidently following
in the footsteps of his master, for he does
not like women either. He will not work
with them. Certainly he has a little reason
for his dislike. Women workers come and
do the lighter jobs which were formerly
to him the only relief from the heavy
work.

He also thinks the war will soon be over
and he is not going to encourage competi-
tors in petticoats. With his master's
opinion. School-boys, even, have the same
superior to women. He fully agrees. But
he is beginning to be a little doubtful of
his master. Did not Farmer Xiang twelve
months ago that he would not have a
woman at any price? And has not he
got ten now and boasting of it?

Can it be that women are "getting
over" the farmer as they have done over
every other man since Adam? At the ap-
ple? The Farmer's Boy himself put up
with two women on the farm, but then
they are "exceptions," they can do a
day's work and "stick" the bad weather.

Every woman who proves her worth on the
land is an "exception" to every Farmer's
Boy.

His doubt as to the farmer is to be ex-
plained in this way. Farmers are of
three kinds. There is the man who has
said his last word on women, and he is
not good—so far as work on the land is
concerned. He would rather—and does
let his land go out of cultivation than employ
women. His objection to women on the
land is a principle, and he intends to
abide by it, Government or no Government.

The second man sits on the fence watch-
ing. "I can size up the masculine gender
in two minutes," he confesses, "but the
feminine has taken me a week. I have
watched the woman from a biased point
of view, being completely against her, but
after a week I've come to the conclusion
that she'll do good work on the land and
what's more, will make money at it."

The third man is the progressive farmer.
He was interested to see what women
could do on the land. In his heart of
hearts he really likes women, although it
is the gospel of his kind to keep them off
the land. He is not really sorry to engage
them, and he very soon becomes proud of
their work.

Other farmers who have no conscientious
objections to women do not, however,
give in as easily as he has done. They
prefer boys to women, even when the
work of the latter has been demonstrated.
Boys can be hired for 45c. per week.
Women set too high a value on them-
selves; they are "too well off for milking."

In this perhaps they are right.
Some women's organisations think that a
milking, with no other work, is too
little for which to bring women to the
country. Others cannot persuade farmers to
give more than 4d. a milking.

No wonder the farmer has a grudge
against woman. She is turning up her
nose at his prices and teaching the land
or a boy to be "safer." In fact, farmers
are complaining that the men who are left
them are irregular and inefficient, and
they are afraid to say a word to them in
case they give notice. And while the
farmer is trying to swallow his prejudice
against woman she is turning her back
upon him. Munition factories set up
near to his land eagerly snap up the
labour he despised, and by and by he
finds that even if he advertises 45c. per
day wages he cannot get the women whom
only he would not have "at any price."

It is a very sore point that one farmer
trained two girls to milk and they are
now going to munitions. Out of 300
farms in one district 30 report a shortage
of women. The farmer does not blame
himself; he does not think it is his fault
that others have been more appreciative.
He blames Sunday work and the unrea-
sonableness of woman. She wants Satur-
day afternoons and Sundays clear—cows
and horses and other animals must look
after themselves over the week-end, he
supposes.

Now, unless someone can persuade the
woman worker that the farmer really
likes her very much and wants her more,
it will be very serious for the country.
These are the kind of reports farmers all
over the country are sending in to the Em-
ployment Department of the Board of
Trade.

Fancy three of us on 316 acres, with
210 sheep, 63 head of cattle, and 21
horses! What a farce to call it farm-
ing!

(Continued at foot of next column.)

SATIN FOR SANDBAGS.

HUN REIGN OF ROBBERY IN
LILLE.

A prominent trader who through age
and sickness was allowed to leave Lille
just before Christmas has arrived in
Paris, and gives examples of the barbar-
ous practices of which the inhabitants are
the victims.

In 1915 the Germans exacted a tribute
of 2750,000, which the municipality re-
fused to pay. Whereupon the Germans
went to the municipal vaults and opened
the safes with blowpipes in approved
burglar style. Two motor-cars were re-
quired to remove the bullion stolen from
the city's coffers.

When the people were ordered to supply
an enormous number of sandbags they re-
plied that it was impossible. "All right,"
said the Governor, "we will make them
ourselves." Hun soldiers then seized every
kind of material, even satin and silks, in
the shops and warehouses and exported
them to Germany, where the sacks were
made, and the city had to pay the bill.

Some shops have had their entire stocks
taken in return for requisition notes.
The Germans do not mind what they
want they take anything they please.
A few objects since the early days of the
war to the employment of joiners on work-
which previously had been strictly re-
served for shipwrights. On the other
hand, frequent conflict has arisen between
plumbers and engineers.

Between these trades there are agree-
ments of long standing, made after many
years of strife, by which certain work
is apportioned to certain trades. The
respective trade unions, not from want of
patriotism, but from want of confidence
in one another, have been slow to pull
down these barriers. They do not fear
any immediate results, for the trades
are all rated at about the same wage,
and, in any case, the employer is under
an obligation to give whichever man
does any given job the rates customarily
paid for that job. What they do fear is
that, if they now allow outsiders to do
what they regard as their own work, a
precedent will be set up which will not
be broken down without great difficulty
when the war ends; and though pledges
and undertakings and written agreements
have been offered to reassure them on the
point, they continue to place every ob-
stacle in the way of a departure from
old-established practice.

One of the first objects, therefore, of
any scheme of organization should be
to remove this quite intelligible opposi-
tion to interchangeability of work be-
tween kindred crafts. It is more deep-
rooted, perhaps, among the rank and file
than among the leaders of the unions,
but the men can be reached only through
their leaders, and it is through them that
the effort should be made.

EXCLUSION OF WOMEN.

The same distrust of the future retards
the extension of the policy of dilution by
semi-skilled or unskilled labour. The
skilled trades, and especially the metal-
working, are jealous of the intrusion of
anybody who has not "served his time"
and they hedge themselves around
with conditions which have the effect, if
not the object, of restricting the process.
For instance, the employer is not regard-
ed as entitled to dilute so long as there
is anywhere in the country a member
of the union involved who is without
employment. While the country is being
scoured for that man, there may be dozens
of men available—fitters, labourers,
platers' helpers, and others—who are
technically semi-skilled, but in practice
often as skilled as the men alongside
whom they labour, and who could well
be employed to do fitters' or platers' work.

Again, by agreement with the Amalgamated Society of Engineers, a woman
may be employed to do certain parts of
the work hitherto done by a skilled man;
but even if her task is only that of
screwing nuts on bolts she must be paid
a certain rate of wages, increasing by
regular amounts until at the end of 13
weeks she is receiving the full rate for a
skilled engineer. When it is remem-
bered that an engineer's apprentice has
to work for five years at the trade before
he earns the fully-skilled "mechanic's
rate," and that, however keen and
anxious a woman may be, her output is
not equal to that of the fully-skilled
mechanic, it is scarcely surprising that
women have not been employed as freely
as they might be to take out really skilled
and experienced labour in the ship-
yards.

Much of the work, it is true, is too
heavy and rough for women, and the
difficulty of supervision is considerable;
but there are some simple machines—
screwing machines and certain types of
boring machines, for example, which could
be operated by women. What can be done
in this direction has been demonstrated
on the Clyde, where 13,000 women have
been introduced as diluted labour into
the shipyard and engineering establish-
ments in spite of unsettlement left by
serious strikes among the men. More
could be done if the Admiralty would
issue definite and even peremptory in-
structions to their overseers in the ship-
yard areas to apply the existing local
agreements to merchant ship construction,
and to push forward the dilution schemes
with all possible vigour in connection
with speeded operations and machines.
The absence of effective local effort is as
grave an obstruction to efficient organi-
zation as the anxiety of the workmen
to keep the door open for those of their
fellows who will come back from the
war.

Another great hindrance to increased
output—irregular time-keeping. All the
information which can be obtained as to
the extent of this evil goes to show that,
on a balance between overtime and lost
time, the shipyard operatives generally
are not working many actual hours more
than in the days before the war. Some of
the men are working much harder. The
sickness and death rates shown by the
trade union benefit accounts are evidence
of the strain which some of their members

I have not sown a bit of wheat, not
having the men to go with the horses.

Potatoes and swedes were spoiled be-
cause they could not be got up in time.

I have restricted sowings of wheat be-
cause I do not know if I shall be able
to gather them.

I have reduced the milking stock by
25 per cent., and shall have to reduce
by 25 per cent. more if labour gets any
worse.

I have no one who will plough, and
it is almost impossible to obtain men-
tor cattle, sheep, and horses.

I have had to dispose of 100 breeding
ewes in consequence of the calling up
of my men on January 1st. I also have
had to put 12 acres of arable land down
to pasture.

Corn and root acreage has to be very
much less.

It stands to reason that if women can
do the work on some farms they can do
it on others. "Women are no good for
ploughing," is the general opinion, but
a girl of fourteen years is learning to
plough on a Yorkshire farm, and is doing
very well.

"Women cannot manage horses," is
another fallacy which has been refuted by
the Army Remount Department. Women
have been successfully employed in this
Department for months.

The fact that women are actually em-
ployed in the following farm occupations
proves that they could be more generally
engaged:—

(1) General Farm Work: Cleaning
land, stone picking, weeding,
thistle cutting, manure spread-
ing, singling and hoeing turnips,
potato setting and lifting, veget-
able planting and transplanting.

(2) Milking.

(3) Stock tending and rearing.

(4) Basket making.

(5) Cheese making.

(6) Poultry rearing.

(7) Hay making.

(8) Harvesting.

(9) Sheep shearing.

(10) Thatching.

(11) Stacking.

(12) Ploughing.

(13) Loading and unloading.

(14) Threshing.

(15) First picking.

(16) Hop picking.

(17) Reed stripping.

(18) Bark peeling.

(19) Timber felling.

(20) Gardening, Jobbing, Market,
Allotments, Co-operative.

In October there were 60,500 whole-time
women workers and 66,000 casual workers
on the land. Close upon 140,000 women
have registered for work. The shortage
just now is generally for experienced
women. Those already at work have been
organised very largely by Women's Agri-
cultural Committees, formed in the coun-
ties under the auspices of the Board of
Agriculture and the Board of Trade.
There has been the task of introducing
the woman to the farmer.

Now he calls her "a treasure" in writ-
ing to the National Land Council, an
organisation which has put some thou-
sands of women on the land. "The high-
ly educated girl of gentle birth between
the ages of 18 and 30 needs no training,
and a very little trouble on the part of
the master puts her in the way of doing
things. The great point is to curb her
energy at first; never let her do more than
three hours the first day, four the second,
and so on. I had nine of this brand last
summer; all were successes, and without
them I could not have got through. I hope
to have a goodly team next summer!"

What will the Farmer's Boy say now?
FREDY SCOTT in the Daily Mail.

BRITISH MERCHANT SHIPS.

CONDITIONS IN THE BUILDING
YARDS.

For a proper understanding of the
problem of labour organization for ship-
building it is important to realize the
real nature of hindrances to the
maximum output which spring from
trade union rules and regula-
tions and to pierce the mind of
those who maintain them, says a special
correspondent of *The Times*. Apart from
irregular time-keeping, nothing has been
more fruitful of trouble to shipbuilding
employers than the rules governing
demarcation of work between skilled
crafts.

In spite of specific provisions in the
Munitions Act, Treasury conferences, and
local agreements, questions of demarca-
tions are continually arising and impeding
the rapid production of ships. One
trade union disputes with another who
should do a particular piece of work,
and while the employer fulfils the uncon-
fortable function of a buffer between the
colliding forces the work suffers. Some
trades abide loyally by their promises,
shipwrights, for instance, have raised
few objections since the early days of the
war to the employment of joiners on work-
which previously had been strictly re-
served for shipwrights. On the other
hand, frequent conflict has arisen between
plumbers and engineers.

Between these trades there are agree-
ments of long standing, made after many
years of strife, by which certain work
is apportioned to certain trades. The
respective trade unions, not from want of
patriotism, but from want of confidence
in one another, have been slow to pull
down these barriers. They do not fear
any immediate results, for the trades
are all rated at about the same wage,
and, in any case, the employer is under
an obligation to give whichever man
does any given job the rates customarily
paid for that job. What they do fear is
that, if they now allow outsiders to do
what they regard as their own work, a
precedent will be set up which will not
be broken down without great difficulty
when the war ends; and though pledges
and undertakings and written agreements
have been offered to reassure them on the
point, they continue to place every ob-
stacle in the way of a departure from
old-established practice.

One of the first objects, therefore, of
any scheme of organization should be
to remove this quite intelligible opposi-
tion to interchangeability of work be-
tween kindred crafts. It is more deep-
rooted, perhaps, among the rank and file
than among the leaders of the unions,
but the men can be reached only through
their leaders, and it is through them that
the effort should be made.

EXCLUSION OF WOMEN.

The same distrust of the future retards
the extension of the policy of dilution by
semi-skilled or unskilled labour. The
skilled trades, and especially the metal-
working, are jealous of the intrusion of
anybody who has not "served his time"
and they hedge themselves around
with conditions which have the effect, if
not the object, of restricting the process.
For instance, the employer is not regard-
ed as entitled to dilute so long as there
is anywhere in the country a member
of the union involved who is without
employment. While the country is being
scoured for that man, there may be dozens
of men available—fitters, labourers,
platers' helpers, and others—who are
technically semi-skilled, but in practice
often as skilled as the men alongside
whom they labour, and who could well
be employed to do fitters' or platers' work.

Again, by agreement with the Amalgamated Society of Engineers, a woman
may be employed to do certain parts of
the work hitherto done by a skilled man;
but even if her task is only that of
screwing nuts on bolts she must be paid
a certain rate of wages, increasing by
regular amounts until at the end of 13
weeks she is receiving the full rate for a
skilled engineer. When it is remem-
bered that an engineer's apprentice has
to work for five years at the trade before
he earns the fully-skilled "mechanic's
rate," and that, however keen and
anxious a woman may be, her output is
not equal to that of the fully-skilled
mechanic, it is scarcely surprising that
women have not been employed as freely
as they might be to take out really skilled
and experienced labour in the ship-
yards.

Much of the work, it is true, is too
heavy and rough for women, and the
difficulty of supervision is considerable;
but there are some simple machines—
screwing machines and certain types of
boring machines, for example, which could
be operated by women. What can be done
in this direction has been demonstrated
on the Clyde, where 13,000 women have
been introduced as diluted labour into
the shipyard and engineering establish-
ments in spite of unsettlement left by
serious strikes among the men. More
could be done if the Admiralty would
issue definite and even peremptory in-
structions to their overseers in the ship-
yard areas to apply the existing local
agreements to merchant ship construction,
and to push forward the dilution schemes
with all possible vigour in connection
with speeded operations and machines.
The absence of effective local effort is as
grave an obstruction to efficient organi-
zation as the anxiety of the workmen
to keep the door open for those of their
fellows who will come back from the
war.

Another great hindrance to increased
output—irregular time-keeping. All the
information which can be obtained as to
the extent of this evil goes to show that,
on a balance between overtime and lost
time, the shipyard operatives generally
are not working many actual hours more
than in the days before the war. Some of
the men are working much harder. The
sickness and death rates shown by the
trade union benefit accounts are evidence
of the strain which some of their members

have undergone; in at least one ship-
yard workers' union the rates for the
last few weeks have been the highest for
a quarter of a century. But many of
the men are working as hard as in pre-
war times, and the evil tends to become
more aggravated.

DRINK AND HIGH EARNINGS.

When it comes to an investigation of
the causes of bad time-keeping, prejudice
must be put on one side. Drink is un-
doubtedly a factor in the problem, but
it is certainly not the only factor, and
it is probably not the most important.
Whatever may have been the case before
the Central Control Board got its grip
on the liquor trade, drunkenness is not
noticeably more prevalent among ship-
yard employees to-day than among other
classes of manual workers. It is a note-
worthy fact that, owing to the restricted
facilities for drinking, the number of
cases before the magistrates in Glasgow
and Newcastle on the second day of the
New Year was insignificant; and that
in spite of the holidays in the ship-
yards.

The primary cause of bad time-keeping,
in the view of close observers, is the high
level of earnings in certain trades. Men
belonging to the "black squad"—bol-
makers, riveters, caulkers, and platers
—and that is piece workers they can earn
all they need by working only three
or four days a week, and they see no
reason why they should work on the
other days. Some of them, indeed, will
tell you frankly that the income-tax
supplies a good reason why they should
not work more. In many branches of the
shipbuilding industry workmen are com-
plaining bitterly against the income-tax
assessments and the refusal of the authori-
ties to allow reasonable abatements for
the cost of tools and travelling neces-
sarily incurred in their daily work.

Why, they ask, "should we work over-
time and endanger our health if the
Government takes our earnings in taxa-
tion?" At least one important union
has sent a strong protest and warning
to the Board of Inland Revenue. When
men are in this frame of mind, even the
total prohibition of the sale of drink
would not prevent them from abstaining
from work after they had earned suf-
ficient to keep them and their families
fed and clothed and housed.

Another factor in time losing is the
exhausting character of the work in some
cases. Few men could work week in,
week out, if they had to deal with, say,
one-inch or one-and-a-quarter-inch rivets.
Finally, the scarcity of skilled labour
with the consequent safety from displace-
ment destroys the chief incentive which
a man had in normal times to attend
regularly at this place of employment.
Taking these considerations together, it
may at any rate be argued that even if
there were no public-houses the workmen
would continue to spend elsewhere, pos-
sibly on whippet racing, bowling, or some
other form of sport or recreation, some
part of what should be their working
week.

The remedy for broken time, in so far
as it is due to sheer laziness or self-indul-
gence—and it must be understood that
this charge is directed not against the
workers as a class, but against a certain
minority among them—is, first, a reprimand
to each individual offender, and,
secondly, a prompt punishment for those
who persist in offending. The trade
union leaders contend that the proper
course for employers to take is to
bring complaints to the union and allow
it to deal in its own way with its own
members. Occasionally this has been
done; the men concerned have been
penalized by fine or suspension of benefit,
and the employers have been satisfied.
Such cases, however, have been few, and
the union officials base on that fact the
assertion that if time is unnecessarily
lost the employers themselves are to
blame.

THE EMPLOYERS' DEFENCE.

The employers, on the other hand,
place the responsibility on the shoulders
of the Government. The rules by which
they are bound, they argue, were im-
posed on them by the Government, and it
is unfair that the Government should
look chiefly to them to initiate pro-
secutions against men. "You cannot
penalize your workmen," said one of
them to the writer, "and then expect to
get the best out of them. If we take
action and bring men before the Munici-
pality Tribunal, the only result is the en-
gendering of ill-feeling between us and
our employees. Moreover, we cannot
seize our staff and time to present cases
before tribunals. The Ministry of Munici-
pations should undertake the prosecution,
so that the personal element may not
enter. In one or two cases the Depart-
ment has taken action, but it took weeks
to prepare its case, and by the time it
was decided the moral effect had been
practically lost."

It may be that there is something to
be said for both these suggestions. There
does not appear to be any good reason
why employers should not avail them-
selves more fully of the offer which many
of the trade union leaders have made to
investigate and deal with alleged cases
of preventable time-losing or deliberate
time-ripping. Nor does there seem to
be any ground for laxity or dilatoriness
on the part of the Government in bring-
ing bad cases to justice. Whether reform
lies in the one direction or the other or
in both, the present state of affairs cannot
be allowed to continue.

Last time, properly regarded, is only
one of the results of the policy of drift
which brought down the late Government.
If it cannot be completely checked, it
can be greatly reduced by a sound policy
administered locally with firmness and
vigour. The preparation and prompt en-
forcement of that policy are long overdue.
There are ships vacant in shipyards, on
which merchant ships could be laid down,
where are partly constructed ships on which
no work at all is being done; there are
other ships which are being built so slowly
that their completion is out of sight; and
meanwhile the enemy is taking toll daily
of our ships at sea. Those who realize
these facts look with hope to the new
Government.

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